Supply of Items to Government Departments by NCCF

1708. SHRI O. P. KOHLI: Will the Minister of CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have permitted the National Consumer Co-operative Federation (NCCF) to supply stationery and other items to Government Departments;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor and whether there is any proposal to permit other co-operative societies the same privilege;

(c) whether NCCF does not have similar infrastructure as are possessed by Kendriya Bhandar/Super Bazar;

(d) whether NCCF has authorised the suppliers to go round Government Departments with NCCF bill books to obtain supply orders and to present their bills for payments;

(e) whether NCCF suppliers do not mention the full description of the items with their proper names in their bills;

(f) the number of letters received in this regard by Government from MPs and the action taken thereon; and

(g) the steps Government propose to take to safeguard the cheating of the public money by the suppliers of the NCCF and to ban their entry in the Government buildings and to send their indents by hand to the institutions?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI H. R. BHARDWAJ): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) The NCCF as a National has necessary infrastructure and expertise has necessary infra-structure and expertise for supply of various consumer goods including stationery items. Local Central/ wholesale consumer co-operative societies are also permitted to undertake supply of stationery and other items to the Government Departments.

(d) and (e) No, Sir

(f) One reference from Department of Personnel and Training enclosing a letter from an M.P. was received for comments of this Ministry. We have furnished our comments to that Department accordingly.

(g) The NCCF has not authorised any supplier to represent the NCCF and therefore the question does not arise.

Average Index of Pulses

1709. SHRI DINESHBHAI TRIVEDI: Will the Minister of CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) what is the monthly average index of pulses in the official wholesale index for the month of September 1994;

(b) whether it is a fact that it has risen by 17% over the level a year ago;

(c) what is the percentage rise in wholesale price of the Urad, Masur and Gram pulses during the month of September, 1994; and

(d) the reasons for the rise in the prices and what steps Government are taking to bring down their prices and by when prices are expected to come down?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI H. R BHARDWAJ): (a) to (c) A comparative statement indicating the index numbers of wholesale prices of pulses during September, 1994 and September, 1993 is given in Statement (*See* below).

(d) The rise in the prices of pulses can be attributed to the existing gap of over 20 lakh tonnes in the demand and supply of pulses in the country. The consumption of pulses has increased at a faster pace due to increase in population over the years and their production has increased relatively at a slow pace. The Government has accorded the highest priority to controlling the rise in prices of pulses within reasonable limits. The prices and availability of pulses are reviewed at the highest level on regular basis and appropriate and timely action taken both for augmenting their supplies through raising indigenous production as well as through imports. Import of pulses has been placed under Open General Licence (OGL). The import of pulses during 1993-94 was higher at 6.27 lakh tonnes as against 3.82 lakh tonnes during 1992-93. During the current financial year (April-August, 1994) a quantity of 2.41 lakh tonnes of pulses has been imported as against 1.80 lakh tonnes during the corresponding period of last year.